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ABSTRACT

The reading program described in this lesson plan extends the study of Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech to demonstrate the ways Native Americans also resisted oppression through rhetoric. During five 50-minute lessons, students will: develop an awareness of both Native and non-Native movements to resist oppression and domination by external forces between 1775 and 1820; develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between individuals and their rhetoric of resistance in America during the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; develop an understanding of the impact of popular stereotypes on perceptions of history; develop an appreciation for the ways the speeches of these Native orators contradict the stereotypes of early Native Americans as "savage" and "uncivilized"; and practice applying a formal strategy for analyzing and evaluating oral communication using occasion, audience, purpose, response, and a variety of rhetorical or literary devices. The instructional plan, lists of web resources, student assessment/reflection activities, and a list of National Council of Teachers of English/International Reading Association (NCTE/IRA) Standards addressed in the lesson are included. A language of resistance analysis worksheet and a presentation rubric are attached. (PM)

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Battling for Liberty: Tecumseh's and Patrick Henry's Language of Resistance

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Grade Band

6-8

Estimated Lesson Time

Five 50-minute sessions

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Overview

Chief Tecumseh

Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death!" has become such a part of American culture that students may not know where the phrase came from, though many will have heard it before. Yet how many know Tecumseh's equally persuasive "Sell a country? Why not sell the air?"

This lesson extends the study of Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech to demonstrate the ways Native Americans also resisted oppression through rhetoric. By examining two speeches by Chief Tecumseh of the Shawnee alongside Henry's speech, students develop a new respect for the Native Americans' politically effective and poetic use of language.

From Theory to Practice

Stereotypically, depictions of Native American resistance to settlers focus only on battles or treaty-making. By exploring the rhetorical features of these speeches, students will become more aware of the ways that Native Americans used language to resist oppression just like the colonists.

Through Native American oral literatures, students can develop a sincere appreciation for the artistic expression and for the validity and the complexity of these literatures. Further, by teaching Native American pieces with the more canonical "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech, language arts teachers can increase students' awareness of the Native American contribution to our national literary history while establishing that these texts should be as much a part of the canon as the more traditional texts.

This lesson is adapted from Susag, Dorothea M. 1998. "Oratory of Resistance and Revolution in American Literature." *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature—Themes, Lessons, and Bibliographies.* Urbana: NCTE. Pp. 67-68.

For more information on why it is important to explore Native American culture and literature with students, see the Introduction to *Roots and Branches.*

Also see information on teaching Native American poetry in Goebel, Bruce A. "Teaching Early Native American Poetry." *English Journal* 91.3(Jan 2002): 38-43.

Student Objectives

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Students will

- develop an awareness of both Native and non-Native movements to resist oppression and domination by external forces between 1775 and 1820.
- develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between individuals and their rhetoric of resistance in America during the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
- develop an understanding of the impact of popular stereotypes on our perceptions of history.
- develop an appreciation for the ways the speeches of these Native orators contradict the stereotypes of early Native Americans as "savage" and "uncivilized."
- practice applying a formal strategy for analyzing and evaluating oral communication using occasion, audience, purpose, response, and a variety of rhetorical or literary devices.

Resources

- Divided Henry Speech for Group Work
- Tecumseh and Henry Analysis Worksheet
- Presentation Rubric
- Thoughts on Indian Images, Names, and Respect
- Worldbook's Big Chalk
- Speech to the Osages in the Winter of 1811-12
- "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" Audio Recording
- "Sell a Country! Why Not Sell the Air?"
- "Tecumseh's Revenge"
- "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" Speech

Instructional Plan

Resources

- Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech, March 23, 1775. Henry's speech is available in most American Literature anthologies, and online at http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/patrick.htm. An audio recording of the speech is available online at http://www.minnesota-law.net/speeches/speech.html#1henry.
- Tecumseh's "Speech to the Osages in the Winter of 1811-1812," available online at http://www.galafilm.com/1812/e/people/tec_speaches.html
- Tecumseh's "Sell a Country!" speech, available online at http://www.phschool.com/atschool/california/why_we_remember/amer_rev_to_1914/primary_sources/WWR_1914_PS5.html.
- General classroom supplies (paper, pens or pencils, board or chart paper, and so forth)

Preparation

- Gather copies of the three speeches to be examined. Each student should have a copy of the speeches.
- Make copies of the Tecumseh and Henry Analysis Worksheet and the Presentation Rubric for all students or prepare overheads or chart paper with the information.

Instruction and Activities

Session One: Prereading

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1. As a whole class, brainstorm a list of speeches that students are familiar with. Speeches can be well-known by general audiences (such as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream"), or might be familiar only at your school or only to particular students (such as a student's campaign speech for a club presidency or a religious oration).
2. In reader-response journals or writer's logs, ask students to freewrite about what makes them recall these speeches. Ask students to think about what makes these speeches persuasive (or not).
3. Distribute copies of Patrick Henry's speech and the analysis worksheet, or share the format with students and have them create a table in their journals or logs. As students read the speech, ask them to keep track of their notes on this table.

Session Two: Patrick Henry

1. Pre-listening: Ask students to think or write about their impressions after reading the speech in their journals or logs. They might imagine what the speech sounded like, note words and phrases that seemed particularly strong to them, or write about anything that caught their attention.
2. Play the recording of Henry's address. Remind students of the setting and situation for the speech. Be sure that students understand that the recording is of an actor.
3. If your students have practice analyzing text for rhetorical techniques, ask them to identify the key techniques that are used in Henry's speech. If, however, your students are not yet ready to extract techniques, give them a list of the rhetorical techniques and ask them to find examples in Henry's speech.
4. Once students have worked through the speech, identifying techniques of repetition, emotionally charged words, metaphor, and rhetorical questioning, play the recording of the speech again, and ask students to pay particular attention to the techniques. Suggest that they keep the following question in mind: How does the actor's tone, volume, and other qualities change when he uses these rhetorical techniques?
5. Post-listening: Ask students to return to the notes that they wrote before they listened to the speech, considering questions such as the following: Does the speech compare to what you imagined when you read it? What made Henry a powerful speechmaker during the colonial period? What surprised you about the speech?

Session Three: Tecumseh

1. Pre-listening: Remind students of the setting and situations for Tecumseh's speeches. Be sure that students understand that the text is a translation of Tecumseh's speeches. Neither Patrick Henry's speech nor Tecumseh's speeches were recorded word for word as they were given. Instead these speeches were written down after the fact, based on the memories of listeners and the speaker. Ask students to brainstorm about the ways that translation and transcription might affect a speech.
2. Read Tecumseh's speeches to the class.
3. Begin by thinking aloud about some of the words used in the translation. The speeches use words we may consider offensive today such as red men, Indian, squaw. See Marge Bruchac's "Thoughts on Indian Images, Names, and Respect" for additional information. Ask students to think about why the translator has used these words.
4. Again, if your students have practice analyzing text for rhetorical techniques, ask them to identify the key techniques that are used in Tecumseh's speeches. If, however, your students are not yet ready to extract techniques, give them a list of the rhetorical techniques and ask them to find examples in Tecumseh's speeches.
5. Once students have worked through the speech, identifying techniques of repetition, parallel structures, concrete natural images, concise sentence structure, and rhetorical questioning, read the speeches again, and ask students to pay particular attention to the techniques. Suggest that they keep the following question in mind: How does your tone, volume, and other qualities change when you use these rhetorical techniques?
6. Post-listening: Ask students to return to the notes about transcription and translation that they wrote before they listened to the speech, considering questions such as the following: How did the translator affect the speech? What made Tecumseh a powerful speechmaker? What surprised you about the speech?

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Session Four: Group Work

1. Divide students into four to five groups. Recognizing all the speeches are about unifying the listeners to resist a common enemy, ask groups to compare and contrast Chief Tecumseh's speeches and Patrick Henry's speech, using the chart that they filled in as they went along. Optionally, students could use the Venn Diagram interactive.
2. Discuss the comparisons with the whole class. Once you're satisfied that students understand the connections between the rhetorical practices in the speeches and the purpose and audience and culture of the speakers, assign each group a passage from Henry's speech to translate into the rhetorical style of Tecumseh. Make sure that students understand that they are not writing a Native American version of Henry's speech. They are writing their own version of a section of the speech, emulating Tecumseh's style.
3. Allow students the rest of the session to work on their translation. Monitor student progress, helping students as needed.

Session Five: Presentations

1. Give students five to ten minutes to make last-minute preparations and to practice their presentation.
2. Have groups present their section of the speech to the entire class, sticking closely to the five-minutes-per-group guideline that you've established.
3. Once all of the groups have presented, focus on the last translation, the passage that ends in the original with Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death!" Ask students to spend several minutes writing down what they've heard in their journals or logs.The students who presented that passage play the role of author attempting to recall what they wrote without looking at the original notes.
4. After allowing time for students to write, volunteers can share their passages with the whole class.
5. Once students have shared, read the the last group's translation again. Have students note changes they want to make. Note that you should read the passage so that all students, including the group that translated the passage, can return to their transcription notes.
6. Conclude the lesson by asking students to return to the issues of transcription and translation in oral discussion or in their journals. Consider questions such as the following:
    a. How did your role as the translator affect the speech?
    b. How closely did your transcription match the original translation of the final passage?
    c. What surprised you about the process of translation and transcription?
    d. What conclusions can you draw now about the versions of Tecumseh's and Henry's speeches that we've read?

Web Resources

"Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" Speech
http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/patrick.htm
Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech is widely available on the Web, in particular in collections of legal documents. This transcription of the speech is from Yale University.

"Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" Audio Recording
http://www.minnesota-law.net/speeches/speech.html#1henry
This link takes you to a Real Audio recording of actor Peter Marinker's performance of Henry's speech. The recording just over 7 minutes long. Note that the page includes other recordings and advertisements that may not be appropriate for your students. As a result, it may be best to play the audio from one computer with speakers for all students to listen to rather than asking students to visit the page and listen to the recording on their own.

"Sell a Country! Why Not Sell the Air?"
http://www.phschool.com/atschool/california/why_we_remember/amer_rev_to_1914/primary_sources/WWR_1914_PS5.htm
Tecumseh's "Sell a Country! Why Not Sell the Air?" speech at this site includes a brief note on the situation of the speech. Note that this speech ends with reference to Christian religion. Gauge

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whether the piece is appropriate for your students and the local community. You can complete the lesson using the Osage speech alone if necessary.

"Speech to the Osages in the Winter of 1811-12"
http://www.galafilm.com/1812/e/people/tec_speaches.html
The Gala Films site on the War of 1812 includes several pages on Tecumseh including the text of his "Speech to the Osages in the Winter of 1811-12." For more background on Tecumseh, browse the other pages at this site.

Worldbook's Big Chalk
http://worldbook.bigchalk.com/
Worldbook's Big Chalk site provides basic biographical information on the two speakers. See http://worldbook.bigchalk.com/549420.htm for information on Chief Tecumseh and http://worldbook.bigchalk.com/253140.htm for information on Patrick Henry.

"Tecumseh's Revenge"
http://www.smithsonianmag.si.edu/smithsonian/issues95/jul95/object_0795.html
This Smithsonian Institute page, "Tecumseh's Revenge" begins and ends with reference to a statue of Tecumseh in the Museum. Between these references is more extensive biographical material than Big Chalk provides.

"Thoughts on Indian Images, Names, and Respect"
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~massasoit/bruchac.htm
Marge Bruchac's "Thoughts on Indian Images, Names, and Respect" explains how words such as Indian and squaw can be offensive. A Native American, Bruchac is careful to discuss the difference between Native American ownership and use of such words and derogatory use of the words.

Student Assessment/Reflections

- Monitor student interaction and progress during group work to assess social skills and assist any students having problems with the project.
- Review student notes in journals and logs.
- Assign an independent writing task to students which allows them to apply their skills individually. The following assignments would work well:
    - Write a persuasive paper or deliver a speech that makes use of the elements of style and purpose you observed in the three speeches.
    - Imagine yourself in the audience of Chief Tecumseh or Patrick Henry. Tell your story and give your impression of the speech to your children or grandchildren.
- As a class, develop a list of rhetorical strategies with examples to use as you examining future readings and texts.

NCTE/IRA Standards

1 - Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

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2 - Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

3 - Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

6 - Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

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Battling for Liberty: Chief Tecumseh's and Patrick Henry's Language of Resistance Analysis Worksheet

	Chief Tecumseh	Patrick Henry
Occasion		
Audience		
Purpose		
Rhetorical Devices		
I also noticed....		

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Battling for Liberty Presentation Rubric

Category	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Understanding of Topic	The team clearly understood the topic. They convincingly demonstrated an awareness of the biases in the material that they examined and the relationship between bias and culture.	The team clearly understood the topic. They demonstrated an awareness of the biases in the material that they examined and the relationship between bias and culture.	The team seemed to understand the topic. They were aware of the biases in the material that they examined.	The team did not seem to understand the topic and/or were not aware of the biases in the material they examined.
Presentation Style	The team consistently used gestures, eye contact, voice and enthusiasm in a way that kept the audience interested.	The team usually used gestures, eye contact, voice and enthusiasm to try and keep their audience's attention.	The team sometimes used gestures, eye contact, and appropriate voice to keep their audience's attention.	One or more of the members did not use body language or style to keep the audience's attention. Someone may have been a distraction.
Information	The team presented information that fully and accurately explained the origin and characteristics of the myth. The information was clear and logical.	The team presented information that accurately explained the origin and characteristics of the myth. The information was generally clear and logical.	Most of the information accurately explained the origin and characteristics of the myth. There may have been some mistakes or some things that were not clear.	The information did not accurately explained the origin and characteristics of the myth and/or the information did not make sense.

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